

Remarks to the National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council and an Exchange With Reporters February 13, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. I want to thank Ed and Del, and I want to thank all of you for serving. This was truly a distinguished council, a very diverse group. I bet you had some interesting meetings. *[Laughter]* I wish I had been privileged to hear all of them.

When Ed McCracken was talking about the reports and he compared it to President Kennedy, he said, you know, President Kennedy launched a move that sent Americans—men to the Moon—no, men into space, he said, men into space. I thought he was going to say this is going to send all of our children into cyberspace. *[Laughter]*

And what I was thinking about, watching Ed and thinking about the work his remarkable company has done—all of you have probably seen that picture of me when I was in high school, shaking hands with President Kennedy. After I saw “Forrest Gump” and thought about Ed, now every child in America will be able to shake hands with President Kennedy. *[Laughter]*

Let me assure you that we are going to take these recommendations seriously. The council’s work may be done, but the Nation’s work is just beginning. And I know I speak for the Vice President, who 20 years ago coined this term “information superhighway,” and Secretary Brown and all the other members of our administration who are around this table, Deputy Secretary Kunin, Mr. Gibbons, Mr. Barram, and others: We are very grateful for this work.

All of you know that we are entering an age of incredible possibility for the American people. I believe that the signing of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 last week will help to increase those possibilities, and I want to thank Reed Hundt and all others who worked on that legislation and all of you who supported it.

If you just think about what has happened since this council was formed in 1993, the growth of the Internet, the hit movie created by computer animation, the explosion of technology, we know that the potential to improve the lives of the American people, both economically and otherwise, is absolutely staggering. And

we all know that we are just at the beginning of that process.

The thing that I liked so much about the Telecommunications Act is that that act was passed in a manner and requires a certain public interest in its implementation that I think represents the best of what we ought to be doing and how we ought to be doing it. You know, the act in the end passed almost unanimously. And it, to me, represents the model of the public and private cooperation we ought to have for the future in so many ways.

It obviously unleashes the forces of the market more than ever before. It will bring vast new opportunities for information, for learning, and for entertainment to the American people. It will do it in a way that is consistent with the best principles of fair competition and public interest. Among other things, it will help your recommendations in the KickStart Initiative to become law because of the guarantees in there for access of schools and libraries and hospitals. So all of these things are very hopeful.

If you think about the challenges facing our country, if you just take the ones that I mentioned in the State of the Union—the challenge to build strong families and to give all children a childhood, the challenge to give every American access to the education we need for the 21st century, the challenge to provide greater economic security for Americans in a time when their particular jobs may be less secure than they were in a former economy, the challenge to make our streets safe, to keep our environment clean, to restore integrity to our Government, to maintain our leadership in the world—all these things will be aided by the technological explosions symbolized by the information superhighway.

We know now, for example, that we can make families more secure by providing better health care because of technology. People in rural areas can contact a doctor in a city all the way across the country for help in dealing with a medical problem. We know we can make our criminal justice system work immensely better because of computers. We see that dangerous criminals can be arraigned by computer without having

to move them from police station to courthouse. We can expand our opportunities to identify problems because of technology. Today if someone steals a car and drives it halfway across the country and leaves it in a shopping mall parking lot, within literally a matter of a couple of seconds, as soon as the car is found, its owner can be identified and the facts surrounding its loss can be established.

We know that technology can enable our Government to work better, and it already has in so many ways. Millions of Americans will file their tax returns electronically this year because of the advances of technology, lifting a lot of burden and time off of them. We know Americans starting small businesses can get all their SBA information from a single place on-line now. And these are just the beginnings. The KickStart Initiative is particularly important to me because of the promise it holds to achieve one of my major goals, to connect all the schools, the libraries, and community centers in this country to the information superhighway by the year 2000.

And it can be done community by community. I was in Concord, New Hampshire, the other day, just 2 days after all the schools in that community were connected. And it was truly a community effort, the kind of thing that we have to have. I happened to be in a school in the neighborhood with the lowest per capita income in the community. And I saw what local community leaders had done to make equipment available to students that they could take home and share with their parents, even students who came from modest circumstances, with parents with no formal education or previous experience.

The community grassroots KickStart element of this whole endeavor, I think, is incredibly, incredibly important, and I applaud you for making it a separate report and making sure that we all do our part to help that succeed.

As you noted in your report, educational technology has actually helped to raise educational performance. You can see it in test scores at the Clearview Elementary School in Chula Vista, California, which you mentioned. You also know that it's allowing students around the country to do things they could never have done before, to examine gray whales, to study Hawaii's volcanoes, to explore the Galapagos, all without leaving the classroom. I remember I met a young man not very long ago in Albany, New York,

an eighth grader who has done a research paper on volcanoes entirely based on resources in Australia, because of his access to the information superhighway.

We know, too, that technology can brighten educational prospects in all kinds of schools, even in areas where achievement had previously been very modest. The Christopher Columbus School in Union City, New Jersey, which you mention in your report, is a school I plan to visit later this week to try to highlight the importance of your recommendations and our goal, and to demonstrate to Americans all across this country that it really can make a difference.

As I said in my State of the Union Address, as we change the nature of work and we change the nature of the workplace, and more and more organizations become less bureaucratic, less hierarchical, and more flexible, the era of big Government is also passing from the scene as defined by big, centralized bureaucracies. This Government today is the smallest it's been since 1965. By the end of this year it will be the smallest it's been since 1963.

But just because we don't have a big Government, in a traditional sense, doesn't mean that we should have a weak one. It doesn't mean we can allow individuals and families and communities to go back to a time when they had to fend for themselves. In this new world we are facing, we can only take advantage of the opportunities and beat back the problems if we work together.

You have set an example. And this report shows the kind of framework of partnership that enables people to make the most of their own lives and communities to do the best they can in seizing their own opportunities that I believe should be followed by Americans in many, many other areas of our Nation's life.

Your support for the Benton Foundation, which I particularly want to applaud, will help countless schools and libraries and communities learn from each other and speed their progress much faster than what otherwise had been possible.

And thanks to the help of Bill Nye, the Science Guy, with the bow tie—that I can't tie—[laughter]—the video produced by Disney and AT&T will make it easier for everyone to understand the information superhighway. I want to thank Bill and Disney and AT&T, and I want to thank all the other companies that

have made their own contributions to this endeavour.

Finally, let me just emphasize what is to you obvious, but may not be obvious to all of our fellow Americans who have not been exposed to these developments. This is not about technology for technology's sake. It's about using technology to help people work together to realize a better future for themselves and for their families. You have helped to challenge America, and you have shown us the way, a way which offers the promise of the American dream to all of our citizens who are willing to work for us and offers us a way to continue to work together in a new era.

That is the most important lesson I have learned as President. We have to find new ways to work together so that people, as individuals and families in the communities, can realize their great promise. And you have done that for us in these two reports. Your country is indebted to you, and I thank you.

Thank you very much.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The Vice President. You did great.

The President. You led the way. Thank you very much.

Iowa Democratic Caucus

Q. [*Inaudible*—think of the Iowa Democratic caucuses—the results?

The President. Well, obviously I was pleased. I think we got all the delegates and almost all the votes, 99.8 percent. [*Laughter*] The thing I'd like to point out, though, that I was astonished by, and I did not learn until about midnight last night, is that apparently, in an uncontested caucus, 50,000 people went. By

contrast, there were only about, I think, 100,000 people in the Republican caucus with nine candidates, and they had anticipated 30,000 or 40,000 more.

And to me, the fact that 50,000 people went out on a cold winter night in Iowa to reaffirm their support for the positive direction in which we're taking the country, and the idea that we do have to work together, we do need a strong set of new ideas in which the Government is a partner in the fight for the future, that's the most rewarding thing of all. I was stunned. There never have been 50,000 people go to the Iowa caucus in an uncontested election—never had been anywhere close to 50,000 people.

And I want to thank the people of Iowa for the reception they gave to me. I want to thank the people who worked for our efforts. And most of all, I want to thank those 50,000 Americans who showed that our people are not cynical, they haven't given up on citizenship, and they are prepared to take control of their future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to NIIAC cochairs Edward R. McCracken, chairman and chief executive officer, Silicon Graphics, Inc., and Delano E. Lewis, president and chief executive officer, National Public Radio; Assistant to the President for Science and Technology John H. Gibbons; Deputy Secretary of Commerce David J. Barram; Federal Communications Commission Chairman Reed Hundt; and Bill Nye, host of the PBS children's television program "The Science Guy."

Remarks to the 1996 Super Bowl Champion Dallas Cowboys February 13, 1996

Please be seated. Mr. Hill, it's good to see you. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House. It's a great pleasure and honor for me to welcome Jerry Jones and his family and Coach Switzer and the entire Dallas Cowboys team, the coaches, the staff. Welcome back to the White House. This is beginning to be boring for them, I think. [*Laughter*]

But this is the only thing that happens at the White House as regularly as the State of the Union Address. In some ways, it's better. It's shorter—[*laughter*—and there's no response. [*Laughter*]

I think everyone in America knows the remarkable record of the Dallas Cowboys, is well aware that they have won the Super Bowl 3 out of the last 4 years and that makes eight